

Big time for a little bakery

French Memories gets nod from Boston media

By Andria Farrell
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It is a Sunday afternoon in the 2 o'clock hour and French Memories bakery is bustling with people. Fathers and sons snack on pizza bagels, gourmet sandwiches and juice after an afternoon of soccer.

The display cases are filled with decadent chocolate bunnies, chickens, fish and eggs in celebration of Easter. Debbie Odier explains that in France, it is customary to give shaped chocolates filled with gourmet chocolates on Easter.

The cases are filled with colorful fruit pies, strawberry tarts and petits fours, an assortment of mini pastries. In celebration of the upcoming holiday, there is a fancy-looking dessert called the Easter Nest – a chocolate mousse and vanilla cake with butter cream streaming together in the most beautiful nest-like effect. Set gently on top are three jelly beans that represent tiny nest eggs.

Debbie and Philippe Odier opened French Memories 17 years ago. After first wanting to open a bakery on Newbury Street in Boston, they settled on the quaint town of Duxbury. They knew right away they had made the right decision.



Staff photo/Andria Farrell

Hungry yet? An Easter display is featured in French Memories bakery on a busy Sunday afternoon.

"Duxbury welcomed us," Debbie said. "We opened in the summer, and the first few days of being open, we ran completely out of product. We couldn't keep up with the volume, and the response has been the same ever since."

Philippe, who was born and trained in France, was the baker for the first 10 years. Seven years ago, they decided to expand their business and opened two more bakeries; Cafe Vanille opened in the Chestnut Hill Mall and on Charles Street on Beacon Hill.

With the opening of two more locations came the need for more help. Paris-trained baker Bruno Biagiatti joined the team as partner and new baker for the three bakeries. You can't have two French bakers in the same kitchen, Debbie explained.

At that time, Philippe stepped out.

This April, *Boston Magazine* features French Memories as one of the top eateries in suburban Boston. And French Memories was featured on the Channel 5 TV show *Chronicle* Monday, April 10, for its top-eatery nod.

French Memories bakery is more than just desserts and gourmet chocolates. The Odiers have developed a popular lunch menu. Tasty baguette sandwiches filled with veggies, cheese and an assortment of meats, can be eaten inside or in the nice little dinning area set up outside for warmer days.

Although this small-town bakery is getting some big-town talk, the Odiers promise they will always remain dedicated to their faithful customers in Duxbury.